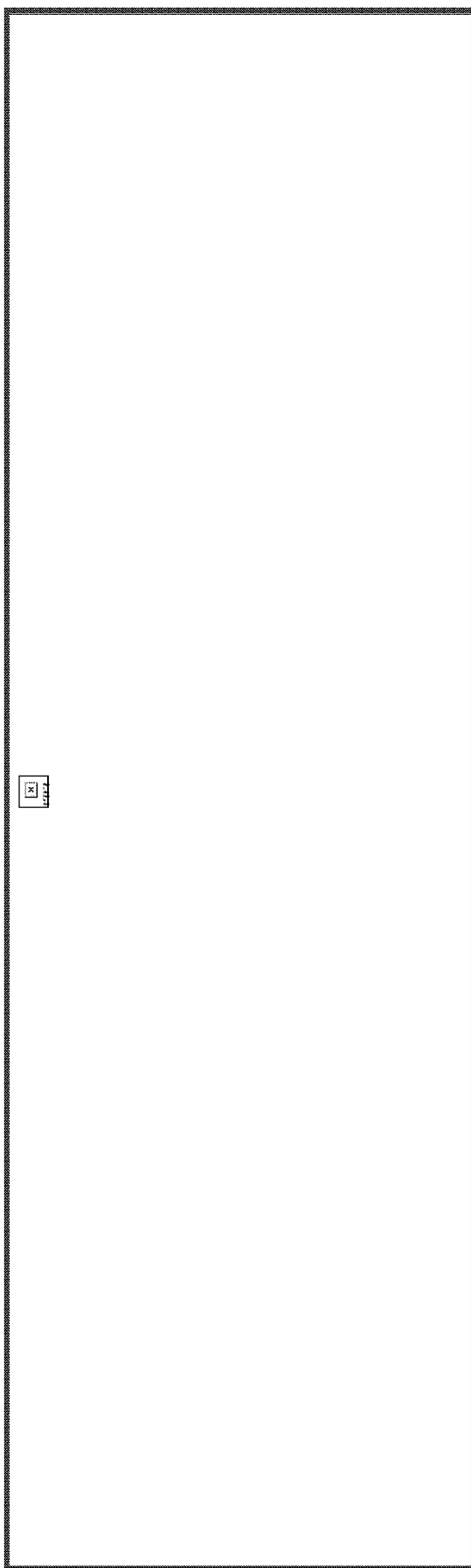


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From: bounce-246044-7238911@listserv.state.ma.us on behalf of Governor Deval Patrick <Constituent.Services@state.ma.us>
Sent: Thursday, December 17, 2009 7:30 AM
To: Farak, Sonja (DPH)
Subject: Thank You



Dear Colleague,

As we reach the end of a particularly challenging year, I wanted to take a moment to reflect upon where we've been, where we are, and where we're going.

With your help, we've worked quickly and diligently to close a cumulative budget gap of nearly \$9 billion since the global economic crisis slammed into the Commonwealth. Though we did everything we could to minimize the impact of these cuts, many good people and worthy programs – people we know and programs we care about – were hurt.

But because we worked together, because we stayed focused on and committed to our values and the long-term strength of our communities and our neighbors, independent analysts now say that our Commonwealth is positioned to recover sooner and faster than the rest of the nation.

Indeed, while other states spent the year simply trying to pass balanced budgets, we have developed and implemented an unprecedented agenda focused on record investments in education, innovation industries like information technology, the life sciences and clean tech, repairing infrastructure and jumpstarting regional growth. You did this, and I am proud of what you did.

Some of the accomplishments I'm most proud of include:

In **January**, we expanded our commitment to wind power by setting a goal of developing 2,000 megawatts of wind power capacity – enough to power 800,000 Massachusetts homes – by 2020. This effort builds off of the Department of Energy's siting of the nation's first large wind turbine testing facility in Charlestown, which is under construction today.

In **February**, we filed sweeping reform legislation for our transportation system to address decades of neglect, eliminating the Turnpike Authority and putting our roads, rails and bridges on the path to fiscal stability, and saving millions of dollars.

In **March**, we developed and released our Massachusetts Recovery Plan, combining billions of dollars in both state and federal monies to help protect and create jobs, while making investments that will position us for a strong recovery. Through ARRA funding alone we have created or retained over 23,000 jobs.

In **April**, we developed a comprehensive public safety package to crack down on illegal firearms, mandate post-release supervision, and reform the Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) system – showing it's possible to be both tough and smart on crime.

In **May**, we began a Community Budget Forum series, during which we traveled to 22 cities and towns, soliciting more feedback on the budget from more citizens than ever before in state history, and furthering our civic engagement agenda.

In **June**, I signed into law three landmark reform bills targeting transportation, ethics and lobbying, and the state pension system – reforms that had been sought after for years (decades, even) but that we delivered.

In **July**, we launched our Communities Count program, leveraging state and federal resources to help cities and towns acquire and rehabilitate vacant properties, weatherize homes and increase public safety.

In **August**, we released the South Coast Rail Corridor Plan – a blueprint for rail service to the South Coast that is estimated to stimulate \$500 million in new economic activity, raise household income by more than \$150 million, and create thousands of new jobs.

In **September**, our Health Care Quality and Cost Council – working with health care executives – outlined a proposal to cut premium increases and save the state tens of billions over the next 10 years.

In **October**, we managed through a \$600 million budget gap while holding school funding and local aid harmless, and protecting our most vulnerable citizens from cuts to vital human services.

In **November**, the State Senate passed our Readiness schools and charter school "Smart Cap" education reform legislation, another step toward closing the achievement gap and delivering world-class education to every single student in the Commonwealth.

And **this month** we celebrated the signing of an "expiring use" housing bill, preserving affordable rents for tens of thousands of our neighbors.

The results of this proud list of achievements are already being felt across the state.

In October, the Boston-Worcester metropolitan corridor was ranked 4th in the nation for clean-tech job activity. Home sales have increased four months running. Unemployment has declined for two months running. CNBC has ranked Massachusetts as the 8th best state to do business in the nation (up from 15th just one year ago) – which means we are attracting more jobs. And our young people have ranked first in the Nation in student achievement for the third

year running.

None of this agenda would have been possible without your dedication and determination. Thanks to your hard work, tough choices, responsible management, and optimism, recovery is on the way.

As we look ahead to more fiscal challenges next year, I want to acknowledge your service to the people of this great Commonwealth. I appreciate you.

Times are tough, and budgets are tight. But our commitment to our state and to support our fellow citizens remains unshaken and unshakeable. For your service, for your sacrifice, and for being a part of the most profound change in state government in a very long time, I say: Thank you.

With best wishes to you and your family on a healthy, happy, and restful Holiday Season,



Deval Patrick

